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DDA Memo, 4 Apr 77

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Date: 270278 By:

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chairman, CIA Career Service Board

SUBJECT: Basic management policy

1. I should like to enter a plea. I should like to ask that an effort be made, in drawing up the Agency's basic management policy, to incorporate in it a few statements on executive responsibility to counter-balance, or to bring into perspective, the very fine phrases on human relations which have now been polished and repolished so many times.

2. We are losing sight, I think, of the plain fact that good executives existed for thousands of years before the new thinking developed. Most if not all of the books on human relations in management were written in the past thirty years. Yet good managers and executives have existed since time immemorial. Doubtless the best of these uninstructed cave-dwellers had an intuitive appreciation of some of the ideals to which we are now devoting so much thought, but it is certain that none of them made the mistake of supposing that these ideals were the primary factors in executive talent.

3. In my own office, I know that junior supervisors - and some who are not so junior - have been misled by the current teaching into the notion that a responsibility which has been delegated is one which has been transferred. This mistake is one which can cause, and which has caused in OCD, complete breaks in the chain of command and a complete dissolution of executive control. In order to remedy this error, I've found it necessary to sit down with groups of my people and emphasize to them that the current teaching does not profess to give the whole story of what is expected in an executive or supervisor. It describes secondary assets only. Assets which are highly desirable, and assets which every top notch executive will develop, but nonetheless assets which are secondary. A top sergeant without any of these assets may well be a better executive than some of the authors of the new books on good management.

4. A man could live on buckwheat cakes for a long time. He might live longer, and he'd certainly be happier, if he had some maple syrup to go with them; but he could survive on the buckwheat cakes alone. Our current teaching, it seems to me, provides the maple syrup without the buckwheat cakes.

James M. Andrews

Assistant Director

Collection & Dissemination

cc: DDCI

Director of Training ✓